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Summary record of the 35th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 10 June 2015, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Oh Joon (Vice-President) ..... (Republic of Korea)

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In the absence of Mr. Sajdik (Austria), Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Economic and environmental questions (*continued*)

(c) Statistics (E/2015/24)

1. **Mr. Pullinger** (United Kingdom), Chair of the Statistical Commission, speaking via video link from London, introduced the report of the Statistical Commission on its forty-sixth session (E/2015/24). Reviewing a number of key issues covered in the report, he said that the main topic of the session had been data in support of the post-2015 development agenda. In that regard, the Commission had endorsed the formation of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, which had met for the first time on 1 and 2 June 2015. A second meeting of the Expert Group was scheduled for October 2015. The Commission had also discussed issues related to the data revolution, particularly the issue of big data, and had discussed and taken decisions in areas that included crime statistics, refugee statistics, household surveys, national accounts, international trade and economic globalization statistics, environmental-economic accounting, governance, peace and security statistics, and agriculture and rural statistics.

2. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/282, the second World Statistics Day would be celebrated on 20 October 2015 under the general theme "Better data, better lives". The resolution also provided that World Statistics Day would be celebrated every five years on 20 October.

3. Drawing the attention of the Council to the draft resolution contained in the report, entitled "2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme", he said that population and housing censuses formed the foundation of national statistical systems and were a valuable source of information for national planning. The Commission launched world population and housing census programmes every 10 years. The 2010 World Population and Census Programme had covered 214 countries and some 97 per cent of the world's population, which had been a truly remarkable achievement. He strongly encouraged the Council to adopt the draft resolution with a view to building on that success.

Action on recommendations contained in the report of the Statistical Commission on its forty-sixth session (E/2015/24)

4. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the draft proposals contained in chapter I, sections A and B, of the report (E/2015/24).

Section A

Draft resolution: 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme

Section B

Draft decision: Report of the Statistical Commission on its forty-sixth session and the provisional agenda and dates for the forty-seventh session of the Commission

5. *The draft resolution and the draft decision were adopted.*

Economic and environmental questions (*continued*)

(a) Sustainable development (E/2015/33)

6. **Mr. Ocampo** (Chair of the Committee for Development Policy) introducing the report of the Committee for Development Policy on its seventeenth session (E/2015/33), said that, at the session, the Committee had addressed the following themes: accountability for the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda; the triennial review of the category of least developed countries; monitoring of countries that were graduating and had graduated from the list of least developed countries; review and fine-tuning of the human assets index of the criteria for the identification of those countries; and the strengthening of implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action).

7. At the 2015 triennial review of least developed countries, the Committee had found one country eligible for inclusion in the list of those countries. The Committee had not recommended its inclusion, however, as that was contrary to the wishes of the country concerned. Meanwhile, 10 countries had been found eligible for graduation from the least developed country category. Angola had been deemed eligible for the second consecutive time and the Committee had recommended its graduation. Kiribati had also been found eligible for the second consecutive time, but had not been recommended for graduation, owing in

particular to concerns about the sustainability of its income level in view of its acute vulnerability; the Committee would revisit a possible recommendation for its graduation at the 2018 triennial review. Five countries had met the eligibility criteria for graduation for the first time, namely Bhutan, Sao Tome and Principe, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Nepal. Those countries had been notified of the findings and would be considered for graduation at the 2018 triennial review. Tuvalu had been recommended by the Committee for graduation in 2012. The Council had postponed consideration of that recommendation but would address the issue again in 2015. The Committee had, moreover, reviewed the development progress of Equatorial Guinea and Vanuatu, both earmarked for graduation in 2017. The Committee had advised Equatorial Guinea to formulate and implement a transition strategy to improve the health and education of its people so as to achieve more balanced social and economic development. Vanuatu continued to achieve steady income growth and improve its human assets; however, the Committee noted with concern the devastating consequences of cyclone Pam, which had hit the country in March 2015, raising uncertainty about the country's near-term development outlook. Several other countries were approaching graduation thresholds, including Myanmar, which was expected to meet the criteria for graduation in the near future, provided it maintained its current robust growth and steady improvement in human assets.

8. The Committee had also reviewed the development progress of countries that had graduated from the least developed country category. In that regard, Maldives and Samoa had continued to achieve steady development progress although they remained structurally vulnerable, particularly to environmental shocks. The Committee reiterated the importance of the international community providing vulnerable countries with concessional financing for climate change adaptation, and had recommended the use of its economic vulnerability index for the allocation of new climate finance, independently of whether or not countries met the criteria for classification as a least developed country.

9. In preparation for future triennial reviews of the list of least developed countries, the Committee had re-examined the human assets index, to which it had decided to add the maternal mortality ratio, the inclusion of which would facilitate the identification of structural impediments to sustainable development. The Committee would continue to examine other elements of the index and fine-tune them as necessary.

10. The current pace of progress of many least developed countries was not fast enough to meet the target set in the Istanbul Programme of Action of enabling half the number of least developed countries to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020. In particular, many continued to face challenges related to their domestic resources mobilization. Although the landscape of development financing had changed significantly and new sources and modalities of public and private financing had emerged, access by the majority of least developed countries to those resources remained very limited and only a few had successfully attracted international private capital flows, such as foreign direct investment, portfolio investment and loans. Official development assistance (ODA) therefore played a critical role in financing for development in those countries. Donor countries that had not yet fulfilled their ODA commitments to the least developed countries should establish credible paths for doing so and should, during the transitional process, define public commitments around a minimum floor of their ODA budgets to be allocated to the least developed countries.

11. Donors needed to improve their compliance with the principles agreed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, particularly by strengthening ownership by recipient countries of donor-supported activities and aligning donor activities with local priorities and procedures. Donors should also take into account differences in countries' needs and their capacity to access other sources of financing and mobilize domestic resources. There was a need for increased support for the financing of certain strategic international public goods, particularly agricultural research and development which could have a significant positive impact on the development progress of the majority of least developed countries. South-South cooperation could also play an important role in that regard.

12. **Mr. Lynn** (Observer for Myanmar) said that since taking office in 2011, the civilian Government of his country had launched wide-ranging administrative, political, economic and social reforms and was implementing a series of short-, medium- and long-term development plans. His Government was confident that Myanmar would soon graduate from the

least developed country category and was encouraged by the assessment of the Committee for Development Policy in that regard. A committee had been established, chaired by the country's Vice-President, to oversee efforts to implement the process required for graduation. The Government was also formulating a master plan to facilitate graduation, and had drawn up a Comprehensive National Development Plan to foster sustainable development, boost the country's human asset index and gross national income, and reduce its long-term economic vulnerability. The Government, which aspired to establish a knowledge-based economy, was strengthening its cooperation with international development partners and United Nations agencies. It warmly welcomed the recent visits to the country by senior United Nations officials and particularly appreciated the assistance provided by the United Nations Development Programme in the area of data assessment. In that connection, the results of the 2014 Population and Housing Census for Myanmar, the first of its kind in the country in over three decades, had been made available in May 2015. His Government looked forward to receiving further financial and technical support from its development partners — a key prerequisite for the country's development and its smooth transition from least developed country status.

Draft resolution E/2015/L.13: *Report of the Committee for Development Policy on its seventeenth session*

13. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

14. **Mr. Lim** Hoon-Min (Republic of Korea), facilitator, said that, following constructive informal consultations, consensus had been achieved on the draft resolution.

15. *Draft resolution* E/2015/L.13 *was adopted.*

Coordination, programme and other questions (*continued*)

(a) Reports of coordination bodies (E/2015/71)

16. **Ms. Petrova** (Acting Secretary, United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination), introducing the annual overview report of the Chief Executives Board for 2014 (E/2015/71) and updating the Council on the Board's first regular session of 2015, said that the Board had continued its efforts to foster policy coherence and coordination throughout the United Nations system in support of Member States' priorities. In particular, it had focused on promoting system-wide preparations for and follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits; strengthening policy coherence and coordination, specifically in the areas of urbanization, youth employment, climate change and cybercrime and cybersecurity; improving the administration and management functions of the United Nations system; and enhancing the effectiveness and impact of United Nations operational activities for development, in line with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

17. In 2014, the Board had reviewed the implementation of selected Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in six countries, namely Benin, Colombia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Pakistan, the Philippines and Yemen. Board members had pledged to scale up support and strengthen coordination in those countries with a view to accelerating the achievement of the Goals. At its first regular session of 2015, the Board had conducted its fifth review of the implementation of the MDGs, focusing on Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Pacific Islands subregion. In total, the Board had now reviewed one subregion and 16 countries, which had all reported that the reviews had helped focus attention on specific Goals, strengthened engagement with national partners, and enhanced collaboration between United Nations country teams and World Bank teams on the ground.

18. The Board had sought to enhance United Nations system-wide coordination and policy coherence in preparation for the post-2015 development agenda by focusing on five interconnected elements that were crucial in efforts to foster sustainable development, namely universality, equality, human rights, integration and data. It had also endorsed a United Nations system-wide approach to data to enhance reporting by United Nations agencies, and had considered how the Organization could best support Member States' efforts to address climate change. In that regard, the Board had reaffirmed its resolve to become climate neutral by 2020.

19. The Board was considering a special cross-cutting support package for small island developing states in the areas of climate change, sustainable development goals and financing for development, with finance, resilience and energy as its main pillars. Work was also currently under way, in coordination

with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, to prepare a toolkit for further mainstreaming of the Istanbul Programme of Action into the work programmes of the United Nations system organizations.

20. The Board had sought to promote system-wide coordination in the preparation of and follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits, including in preparation for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). The Board had also issued joint statements and papers in support of a number of conferences and summits, including the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. It had expanded its consideration of the regional dimensions of the issues on the Board's agenda and had deepened its engagement with the United Nations regional commissions.

21. The Board's three subsidiary bodies, namely the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group, had discussed how the United Nations system could respond effectively to Member States' call for a universal and integrated development agenda that could make optimal use of resources and expertise. Among its coordination efforts, the High-level Committee on Programmes had started work on a proposal for a United Nations system initiative on youth employment to promote greater policy coherence and coordination; it had also taken steps towards the launch of a global initiative on decent jobs for youth. With regard to operational matters, the United Nations Development Group had continued to afford highest priority to the coherent implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution across the United Nations system, and had continued its efforts to promote operational coordination and effectiveness by developing a number of tools to guide country teams. The High-Level Committee on Management had continued to give particular priority to the harmonization and simplification of business practices. Inter alia, it had endorsed a road map on climate neutrality with a view to promoting the environmental sustainability of United Nations operations, and had approved an occupational health and safety framework, to be implemented in phases between 2015 and 2018, with a view to optimizing occupational safety and health conditions and working environments across the Organization.

22. **Ms. Derderian** (United States of America) said that her delegation welcomed the ongoing efforts of the Chief Executives Board to foster a coherent approach on policy, operational and management matters to enhance United Nations system-wide coordination. The work was leading to considerable savings in the area of procurement, and was helping organizations to work more effectively together at the country level. The Board should more actively encourage United Nations bodies to work with the United Nations Office for Project Services, which had a strong record of providing effective and efficient procurement services. Turning to finance and budget and risk management, she commended the High-Level Committee on Management, which had dedicated significant resources to supporting United Nations country teams in "Delivering as one" countries. In several of those countries, operational efficiency had been improved in such areas as collaborative procurement, common banking contracts and joint negotiation of foreign currency exchange rates. Her delegation encouraged other country teams to adopt the frameworks developed by the High-Level Committee on Management with a view to mainstreaming them across the entire United Nations system.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.